

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Women's oppression is one of the issues which occurs for centuries without any concrete solution to solve it yet. Even, in the history of Roman and Greek, women have been known as man's property. Women have to obey their husband's commands and almost have no freedom to do their own desires. Women's oppression becomes one of serious problems that still occur in present days. Many stories about oppression toward women in society can prove that women's oppression still does exist.

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the definition of oppression is "the power of authority which unjust or cruel". In other words, oppression means treating people in a cruel and unfair way. Another definition is from Deutsch (2006:10), "oppression is repeated experience, widespread, and systemic injustice, for example slavery, apartheid, lack of a right to vote nor violent". Based on the definition above, researcher concludes that women's oppression is an injustice act toward individual especially woman in order to force to do something by cruel way. Woman does not have freedom, right, or equality of anything. This injustice act can make the woman down, depression, or another mental pressure.

Oppression can occur in many places even surrounding us. Oppression toward women occurs not only in domestic sphere but also in public sphere. In domestic sphere, oppression can occur in particular family when a husband treats his wife by cruel way such as beating, fronting, or slapping that can give bad effects to his wife's physic or psychology. In another word, it can be said as domestic violence. In public sphere, the form of oppression which often happens is limitation of women participation in workplace or other public opportunities such as in law, education, politics, society, science, technology, and so on. Another kind of oppression toward women in public sphere is case of rape.

According to Young (1990: 45-56), there are five types of oppression namely: violence, exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, and cultural imperialism.

From the phenomenon above can be concluded that women's oppression becomes as a complex matter of women's issue which still deserved to be discussed in present day. Although feminist movement had existed in the end of nineteenth century, people still have not accepted well the concept of equality between men and women to get right. The feminist movement still needs to struggle for getting avowal from people especially men that women have equality of right.

In case of oppression done by men's domination, feminism becomes a weapon to reach the equality of right between men and women. The priority of feminism is to evaluate the status of women and men in social life with the goals to encourage the knowledge for the achievement of women's better life. Feminism also encourages the thought and efforts to create the suitable ways to solve the discrimination and oppression toward women. After feminist movement, there are many studies of science increase the topic of women including literary studies.

Literary study can be said as imitation of human life. In literature, there is a range of issues including the issues of women. Literature is a piece of art work relate to the expression and activity of the creation. Literary work can be distinguished into poetry, fiction, and drama. Fiction is divided again into short story, novella, and novel. Novel is a literary work in the form of stories that contains many elements that easily attract the reader's curiosity. In the novel, there is a literary language that seeks to persuade, influence, and even change the mind of thinking of the readers. It happens in *The Spy* novel which becomes one of the results of the literary work which describes an issue happened as portrayal of women's oppression.

*The Spy* is a novel written by Paulo Coelho. He was born in 1947 in the city of Rio de Janeiro. He is a Brazilian novelist. The theme of Coelho's work is surrounding humanity and the universality of his work is evident in the types of message he send across to his readers. His life becomes the primary source of

inspiration for his works. Coelho has passed many problems and experiences in his life. One of the author's experiences that become a subject of oppression is relate to the issue taken by the researcher.

Paulo Coelho had been struggled many problems in his life before he started to be a writer. Coelho is known as a writer who writes his work based on real event such this novel. He conducted his self as a primary source of his works. He conducted his experiences as an inspiration to write his novel. This novel tells about the struggles of woman who wants to be independent and being herself without being oppressed. The story is based on real event that occurs in the past. This novel is written from the perspective of woman, similar to Coelho's previous novel, *Adultery*.

*The Spy* tells an interesting story about a woman who got some unfair acts from social environment especially from men. The main character is Margaretha Zelle, but her popular name is Mata Hari. Mata Hari grows up in a city named Leeuwarden, north of Netherlands. Then, when Mata Hari was 16 years old, she raped by the principal of her school. It was a horrible experience that she ever had. The experience has changed her life. From the experience, she began to associate sex with something mechanical, something that had nothing to do with love. It also made most her life unable to feel love. Then, in order to escape the oppressive surroundings her, she married with a Dutch officer, Rudolf.

After getting married, her life changed bitter. Her husband is jealous and possessive person. Her husband treats her violently. She is beaten, raped, forced, abused, burden by her husband. He treats her like a whore. She gets impossibility of running away and returning home, and the loneliness that came from being forced to spend months indoor. In her marriages, she born a daughter and a son but the son poisoned by his one of nannies. It is because the retaliation of nanny who has been constantly beaten, raped, and burden by endless working hours.

One day, everything has changed. She makes a decision to go away from her husband to Paris. In Paris, she becomes a famous oriental dancer. She just wants to be herself and being free. She approaches the richest and powerful men

at that era to fulfill her needs. Unfortunately, she is set up and trapped by the men she deals with. She becomes a victim of brewing world war. She is accused as spy for German and condemned to death. In that era, the world is dominated by men. Everything is a trap for women in those days.

Based on the summary of *The Spy* novel above, it can be concluded that there are several depicted of women's oppression which in the novel represented by a main character. It becomes the object of the study that the issue of oppression is closely relate to the strong patriarchal culture occur in various place in the world. The life story of women in the novel, such as women being raped by men, beating, forced to work over, abusing, violence and so on are the real implication of women's oppression occur in the world.

There are three reasons why the researcher is interested to analyze this novel. First, this novel tells about woman who is independent, never give up, optimist, strong, and brave. The characterization of Mata Hari is difficult to be found in other women.

Second, *The Spy* is created based on true story. The setting of this story takes place in several countries such as Netherland, Indonesia, German, and France. The setting of time happens when the World War I. It was the time when the patriarchy had power dominantly. It makes this novel interesting and challenging to be read because it can increase the reader's knowledge and depiction about life especially how women and men life in World War era.

Third reason is the author tells the story from the first person point of view. It makes the reader can understand the characters feeling deeply. This novel also adds some words from France language that can increase new vocabulary to the readers. Based on the reasons above, researcher is interested to analyze this novel by taking woman oppression as the issue for conducting the research entitled **Women's Oppression Reflected in Paulo Coelho's "The Spy" Novel (2016): A Feminist Perspective.**

**B. Problem Statement**

In order to depict how women's oppression is reflected in this novel, the problem statement is further dissected into the following research questions.

1. How is women's oppression depicted in *The Spy* novel?
2. What are the indicators of women's oppression are depicted in *The Spy* novel?
3. Why is women's oppression addressed by the author in *The Spy* novel?

**C. Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study is accordance with the research questions, they are:

1. To describe how women's oppression is depicted in *The Spy* novel.
2. To identify the indicators of women's oppression depicted in *The Spy* novel.
3. To show the underlying reasons why women's oppression is addressed by the author in *The Spy* novel.

**D. Benefit of the Study**

This study is expected to give some benefit as follows:

1. Theoretically, this research expects to enrich the study of the literature especially on *The Spy* novel written by Paulo Coelho and its contribution for English Department students particularly in learning about novel.
2. Practically, the result of this study hopefully increases the knowledge and experience of the researcher and other students at UMS or other universities interested in literary studies.

### **E. Research Paper Organization**

The research paper organization of “WOMEN’S OPPRESSION REFLECTED IN PAULO COELHO’S “THE SPY” NOVEL (2016): A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE” is as follows:

Chapter I contains of Introduction which consists of Background of the study, Problem Statement, Objective of the Study, Benefit of the Study, and Research Paper Organization.

Chapter II is Literature Review which explains about Underlying Theory of Feminist Perspective, The principles of Feminist Perspective, Previous Study, and Novelty of the Research.

Chapter III is Research Method which shows about Type of the Study, Object of the Study, Type of Data and Data Source, Method of Collecting Data, Technique of Analyzing Data, and Data Validity.

Chapter IV is Historical Background that explains about Women Movement in 21<sup>st</sup> Century generally in some Regions of the World.

Chapter V consists of Finding and Discussion.

Chapter VI contains of Conclusion and Suggestion of the research and Pedagogical Implication.